

Christian Order

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As Always

at this time of year we are gearing ourselves for the "rough" time ahead. This takes the form of a massive inflow of renewals and (very hopefully) new subscribers. We are only too happy to do this, but ask those readers whose subscriptions are due this month to renew, please, without delay; also, those November renewers who will receive reminders in a few weeks. It will mean a great deal to us if these renewals can be cleared speedily before the December rush sets in. Thank you all so much.

—Paul Crane, S.J.

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Please let us know two or three weeks ahead if possible and please send us both new and old addresses. Thank you.

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Paul Crane SJ

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Arcic and its Critics

THE EDITOR

IN April, 1982, the Anglican-Roman-Catholic International Commission published its *Final Report*, a glossy brochure of 122 pages expensively priced at £1.95. It contained the ARCIC *Statements on Eucharistic Doctrine* (1971); *Ministry and Ordination* (1973); *Authority in the Church I & II* (1976 & 1981); and the two *Elucidations* (1979 & 1981), purporting to clarify the meaning of the earlier statements. The Co-Chairman of ARCIC, Bishop Alan Clark representing the Catholic Church and Archbishop H. R. McAdoo representing the Anglican Communion, wrote an "Introduction" in which they referred to prefaces of earlier Statements in which they had claimed that "substantial agreement" had been reached, and that "in what we have said here both Anglicans and Roman Catholics will recognize their own faith". These two statements are contradictory. It is impossible that the Commission could have reached a substantial agreement in which Catholics and Anglicans could *both* recognize their own faith; the reason being that Catholic and Anglican teaching on all the topics dealt with are totally contradictory. Therefore, if a substantial agreement had been reached, it meant that one side or the other must have agreed to abandon what it had hitherto believed, and had accepted the position of the other.

There is, of course, a way in which a number of Catholics and Anglicans could be given the impression that they recognized their respective faiths in the Agreements. This would be by phrasing them in ambiguous terminology which could be interpreted in a Catholic or Protestant sense. "How had the Arians drawn up their creeds"? asked Cardinal Newman in his *Apologia pro Vita Sua*: "Was it not on the principle of using vague ambiguous language, which to the subscribers would seem to bear a Catholic sense, but which, when worked out in the long run, would prove to be heterodox"? From the moment the first of the *Agreed Statements* appeared there has been a striking manifestation of the *sensus fidei*: learned theologians, parish priests, and laymen alike have denounced them precisely on the grounds that they are, at the best, ambiguous, and totally unacceptable as an expression of Catholic teaching. Some have gone further. Father Edward Holloway, the Editor of *Faith*, has spoken of "a betrayal of the Catholic Faith, and hence also a betrayal to our Anglican brothers of that sincere portrayal of the essential Eucharistic Faith of the Roman Catholic Church which the Catholic delegates, and especially the bishops concerned, were accredited to present". Father Holloway has raised a most important point here. These *Statements* constitute a great disservice to true ecumenism as they have raised among our Anglican brethren considerable optimism of impending reunion. Yet, there is no possibility whatsoever of the *ARCIC Statements* ever being ratified by the Vatican and, when this is made clear, deep and bitter disillusionment is bound to arise among Anglicans.

Considerable efforts have been made by the ecumenical establishment to suppress criticism of the *Statements* rather than answer the criticisms themselves. Many of the *ARCIC* ambiguities were exposed in the highly successful *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* Meeting at the Porchester Hall, London, on February 20th, 1982. Bishop Hugh Lindsay wrote to *The Universe* on 9 April, 1982 denouncing these criticisms as "lacking in reverence and charity towards the Holy Father who is the Vicar of Christ" because he was "certain that Pope John Paul has not, and

would not, allow the circulation of Reports if they clearly obfuscated the central doctrine of the Catholic Faith". The significant point here is that Bishop Lindsay makes no attempt to answer the criticisms of the *Statements*. He simply claims that, if they were valid, the Pope would not have allowed the Reports to circulate. But as the article that follows (to say nothing of the Observations of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) proves conclusively, the *Statements* do obfuscate some central doctrines of the Catholic Faith. This is absolutely indisputable. The Pope, therefore, must have his own reasons for allowing the *Statements* to circulate. These are probably that the views expressed in them represent no more than the personal opinions of the signatories and do not commit the Church in any way; and that, as the *Statements* have been produced as a result of a decision made by his Predecessor, he would have been unable to forbid their publication without implicitly criticising Pope Paul VI. It is an unwritten law in the Vatican that popes do not criticise their predecessors, they just quietly shelve projects and policies they wish to change.

Fortunately, the implicit charge of disloyalty directed by Bishop Lindsay at critics of the ARCIC *Statements* backfired upon him almost immediately when, on 10 May, 1982, the 10 May edition of *L'Osservatore Romano* (English edition) published the full text of the official critique of the *Statements* published by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. It repeated in almost identical terms many of the criticisms of ARCIC which have appeared in *Christian Order*, making it clear that it is the critics rather than the defenders of the *Statements* who think with the mind of the Church. The SCDF (Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) critique, after a few polite preliminaries, points out that the texts admit of a twofold interpretation and that:

"This possibility of contrasting and ultimately incompatible readings of formulations, which are apparently satisfactory to both sides, gives rise to a question about the real consensus of the two Communions, pastors and faithful alike. In effect, if a formulation which has received the agreement of the experts can be diversely

interpreted, how could it serve as a basis for reconciliation on the level of church life and practice”?

It notes that there are difficulties concerning doctrinal formulations “some of which touch the very substance of the faith”; which is precisely what Bishop Lindsay said could not be the case. Will he now accuse the SCDF of being lacking in reverence to the Holy Father? And, in striking contrast to the conclusions of the Co-Chairmen of ARCIC in their “Introduction”, the SCDF affirms that the ARCIC *Final Report* “does not yet constitute a substantial and explicit agreement on some essential elements of Catholic faith”.

The article which follows by Michael Davies bears a striking similarity to the SCDF critique, which follows it. In places, Davies makes the same criticism as the SCDF and in virtually identical terms. Yet, his critique was completed several weeks before that by the SCDF was published. There could hardly be a more authoritative endorsement of the criticisms made by Mr. Davies. Readers are urged not merely to read but to study his article and the *Observations* of the Sacred Congregation with the utmost attention and care.

THE CONSECRATION

As the words Qui pridie
Quam pateretur are spoken
The personality of the priest
Is lost, wholly absorbed
In the person of Christ.
Clothed body and soul
In the sacred vesture
Of the Priesthood of Christ,
Of Christ the eternal priest.

—Fr. Joseph Brown

In July this year Professor J. P. M. van der Ploeg, O.P. celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood. Professor van der Ploeg has been a most valued contributor to *Christian Order*. He is a Doctor and Master of Sacred Theology, Doctor of Sacred Scripture, a member of the Royal Academy of Sciences of the Netherlands, was formerly Professor of Old Testament Studies at the Catholic University of Nijmegen, and is an authority on the Dead Sea Scrolls. *Ad multos annos*. The Dutch review *Katholieke Stemmen* wished to honour Professor van der Ploeg by devoting its June/July 1982 issue to articles by writers from different countries written specially to mark his jubilee. Michael Davies contributed the one which follows. It is printed in *Christian Order* with the permission of the Editor. Dutch-speaking readers may like to know that the address of *Katholieke Stemmen* is Ge. Winkelmanstraat 66, Tilburg 5025 XS, Holland.

Demolishing the Church

MICHAEL DAVIES

IN his Apostolic Constitution *Sacerdos in aeternum* (20 April, 1744) Pope Benedict XIV provided an admirable summary of Catholic belief concerning the ministerial priesthood. His exposition followed the Council of Trent very closely. It has been repeated and amplified by many subsequent pronouncements of the Magisterium:

"The priest, forever, Christ Our Lord, on the same night He was betrayed, granted the Apostles, chosen by Him, the power to consecrate His Body, to offer, and distribute it. Later on, after His Resurrection, having conferred the Holy Spirit, He gave them unlimited power to remit and retain sins; at the same time, by His example and order, He established and sanctioned that

for the future this power and this faculty should be communicated and extended to all the Church solely by means of lawful ordination to the Priesthood. By so doing He abolished the old ministry of the Levites, and the priesthood of the law of Aaron who were the type and figure of heavenly priesthood. To all His adopted children He opened the way to a new priesthood according to the Order of Melchisedech. Only those called by God and rightly trained and ordained by the Apostles and their successors can be elevated to the exercise of this sublime ministry”.

Among the fundamental Catholic dogmas included explicitly or implicitly in this passage are the following:

- (1) The Sacrament of Order was instituted directly by Christ Himself.
- (2) It is imparted by the laying on of hands by a bishop whose own orders were received in the same way through an uninterrupted line going back to the Apostles.
- (3) That a “character” is imprinted by ordination which means that
- (4) The ordained man differs not simply in degree but in *essence* from the unordained
- (5) And has powers which the unordained do not possess, namely:
 - (a) to consecrate
 - (b) to absolve.

REPUDIATION OF THE CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD

In not a single instance are these fundamental dogmas affirmed without ambiguity in the ARCIC (Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission) *Statements*, including the 1979 *Elucidations*. Writing in the 29 June, 1979 issue of the *London Universe*, Dr. Edward Carey, an English theologian, commented: “The labours of ARCIC have not brought Anglicans and Catholics nearer in doctrine. Rather, the specialised jargon, the ambiguities and even equivocations of the *Agreed Statements* have inhibited any real dialogue and provide no basis for further progress towards unity”. The proliferation of specialized jargon, ambiguity, and equivocation within the ARCIC

documents is well calculated to confuse the reader who has no specialized knowledge of theology. Such Catholics might even imagine that in some instances the teaching of the Church has been upheld, which is hardly surprising as the ambiguous terminology intended to give this impression was devised by trained theologians after years of painstaking discussion and deliberation. In examining these documents it is perhaps even more important to note what they do not say, rather than what they actually do say—or purport to be saying.

Fortunately, we have been provided with an excellent criterion for deciding exactly what the first two *Agreements*, on the Eucharist and Ministry, do and do not affirm from the standpoint of Catholic doctrine. Dr. Julian Charley, an Anglican member of the Commission, has written commentaries on them. Dr. Charley belongs to the Evangelical (Protestant) school of Anglicanism, by far the most numerous and influential body within the denomination. As a committed Protestant he clearly rejects Catholic teaching on the priesthood and the Mass, and could not possibly have put his signature to a document affirming this teaching unless he had undergone a conversion. His commentaries, and a subsequent lecture, make it clear that he has not done so. Thus, when Dr. Charley states that an agreement does not affirm a particular doctrine, we have every right to consider his interpretation accurate. It will therefore be most instructive to discover which fundamental Catholic doctrines on the Priesthood and Eucharist Dr. Charley assures us the ARCIC Statements do *not* affirm. In 1979, a document entitled *Elucidations* was published in order to clarify some of the obscurities of the earlier *Statements*. It will be examined to see if it remedies any of the deficiencies in these *Statements* (from the Catholic standpoint), which Dr. Charley has exposed.

In the space available to me for this article it is not possible to provide a detailed examination of all the deficiencies of the first two ARCIC documents. I shall confine myself to examining them from the standpoint of the headings which I have already listed, viz.:

- (1) The Sacrament of Order was instituted directly by Christ Himself.

- (2) It is imparted by the laying on of hands by a bishop whose own orders were received in the same way through an uninterrupted line going back to the Apostles.

Vatican II follows Trent in teaching that the Sacrament of Order in the Catholic Church is of *divine institution*. Our Lord consecrated His Apostles as bishops at the Last Supper. The powers He gave them were *permanent* and meant *to be transmitted to their successors* by the laying on of hands. This power was to continue *without interruption* and has indeed been handed down *without a break* to our present-day bishops who are *the lawful successors* of the Apostles in the Church, which is a *hierarchically structured society*. (1)

Not one of these fundamental dogmas is affirmed in the *Agreement on the Ministry*. The *Statement* makes a distinction between the function of "oversight" (*episcopo*) and the office of "bishops" (*episcopoi*). The *Statement* affirms the existence of oversight in the New Testament, but not the existence of bishops:

"The early churches may well have had considerable diversity in the structure of the pastoral ministry, though it is clear that some churches were headed by ministers who were called *episcopoi* and *presbyteroi*. While the first missionary churches were not a loose aggregation of autonomous communities, we have no evidence that 'bishops' and 'presbyters' were appointed everywhere in the primitive period (para. 6)".

The agreement which the *Statement* reveals can be summed up briefly as: "*Episcopo* yes, *episcopoi* not proven". It interprets the meaning of "apostolic" in the Creed not as the transmission of orders by the laying on of hands in an unbroken succession, but as teaching what the Apostles taught (which every heretical sect claims to do):

"The Church is apostolic not only because its faith and life must reflect the witness to Jesus Christ given in the early Church by the Apostles, but also because it is charged to continue in the Apostles' commission to communicate to the world what it has received (para. 4)".

From his Evangelical standpoint, Dr. Charley is totally satisfied that the Statement nowhere affirms that the priesthood was instituted by Christ, and that it has been transmitted from the Apostles without a break by the laying on of hands. In his commentary on the *Agreement on the Ministry* (the Canterbury Statement) he writes:

"Now the Commission's *Statement* emphasizes "oversight" (*episcopo*) as an essential element in the ordained ministry (para. 9). It does not say the same about "bishops" (*episcopoi*). Instead there is a *description* of Anglican and Roman Catholic practice—what happens and why (e.g. para. 9). No exclusive claim is made for possessing the only acceptable form of Church order. This is implicit in the words of the Co-Chairmen about "respecting the different forms that the ministry had taken in other traditions" (Preface). It leaves wide open the question whether any other denominations would be obliged in any future *rapprochement* to take episcopacy into their system (pp. 16-17)". (2)

He adds that:

"The *Statement* says nothing about Apostles appointing bishops and thus establishing an unbroken chain down to the twentieth century: the fact is that there are too many links missing for such an assertion (p. 19)".

- (3) A "character" is imprinted by ordination which means that
- (4) The ordained man differs not simply in degree but in essence from the unordained
- (3) And has powers which the unordained do not possess, namely:
 - (a) to consecrate
 - (b) to absolve

In its Twenty-third Session (15 July, 1563) the Council of Trent pronounced the following anathema:

"Canon IV. If anyone saith that, by sacred ordination, the Holy Ghost is not given; and that vainly therefore do the bishops say: 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost'; or that a character is not imprinted by that ordination; or that he who has once been a priest can again become a layman; let him be anathema".

The fact that a character, a permanent designation by Christ, is conferred by the Sacrament or Order, was also taught by the Council of Florence, it was repeated by the Second Vatican Council, the second Synod of Bishops in 1971, and the Declaration *Mysterium Ecclesiae* published by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on 24 June, 1973. (3)

Two other sacraments, Baptism and Confirmation, imprint an indelible character upon the soul and cannot be repeated. Each of these sacraments makes an essential change in the person who has received them. A person who has been baptized is essentially different, has a different nature, from an unbaptized person. The difference between a validly ordained person and a layman is that ordination confers the powers to consecrate and absolve, and also to ordain where it is a case of episcopal consecration. The fact that an ordained person has powers which he did not possess before is summed up in the phrase "*different essentially and not only in degree*". This phrase was used by Pope Pius XII, the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI, the Declaration *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, and by Pope John Paul II in his *Letter to Priests* on Holy Thursday, 1979. (4)

The Catholic Church teaches that there are three forms of priesthood. The first is the priesthood of Christ, the other two forms are a participation in this priesthood. There is the universal, common, or interior priesthood which derives from Baptism and is shared by all the faithful. Pope Pius XII explained in his Encyclical Letter *Mediator Dei* (1947):

"By reason of their baptism Christians are in the Mystical Body and become by a common title members of Christ the Priest; by the "character" that is graven upon their souls they are appointed to the worship of God, and, therefore, according to their condition, they share in the priesthood of Christ Himself".

The Catholic people form a holy priesthood; they offer spiritual sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:5 & 9). An error of the Protestant Reformers was to teach that there is no other form of priesthood apart from this common or universal priesthood. They considered it

a matter of propriety, though not of necessity, that certain persons should be chosen and appointed by the Christian community, or its accepted representatives, to teach the word of God and administer the sacraments; but that, though not ordinarily lawful, there is nothing to prevent any one of the faithful from discharging those functions in a case of necessity. The person chosen to preach and administer the sacraments could (but not as a matter of necessity) receive the authorization of the community in a ceremony of public ordination, incorporating prayer and the imposition of hands; but they were adamant that this was not a sacrament, nor was any sacramental grace conferred by it. Ordination was merely a sign of public approval, admitting a man who had received a call from God to the lawful exercise of the function of preaching and administering the sacraments. But the ordained minister differed only in degree from the rest of the community; he had been appointed to an office. He had undergone no essential change in his nature, and possessed no powers denied to the rest of the community. Every Christian was *able* to do what the minister did, but only he was *authorized* to do it. Martin Luther summed up the Protestant position very clearly:

"All of us alike are priests, and we all have the same authority in regard to the word and the sacraments, although no one has the right to administer them without the consent of the members of his church, or by the call of the majority (because when something is common to all, no single person is empowered to arrogate it to himself but should await the call of the Church)".
(5)

Pope Pius XII explained very clearly that an ordained priest does not derive his powers and authority from the community. It is true that he represents his people before God, but he is primarily the representative of God among the people. The Pope wrote in his Encyclical *Mediator Dei*:

"Only the Apostles and those who since have duly received from them and their successors the imposition of hands possess that priestly power in virtue of which they stand before their people as Christ's representative,

and before God as vice-gerent of the people. This priesthood is not transmitted by heredity or blood relationship, *nor does it originate in the Christian community, nor is it derived by delegation from the people.* Before acting in God's sight on behalf of the people, the priest is the ambassador of the divine Redeemer; and because Jesus Christ is the Head of that Body of which Christians are members, the priest is God's representative for the people entrusted to his care. The power committed to him, therefore, has nothing human about it; it is supernatural and comes from God . . . Therefore the visible and external priesthood of Jesus Christ *is not given in the Church universally, generally, or indeterminately*; it is imparted to selected individuals by a sort of spiritual birth in one of the seven Sacraments, Holy Order. This Sacrament not only grants the grace proper to this particular function and state of life, it also confers an indelible character shaping sacred ministers to the likeness of Christ, and enabling them to perform the lawful acts of religion by which men are sanctified and God duly glorified according to the divine ordinance".

The Church teaches that the Mass is primarily the action of Christ, *actio Christi*, in which our divine Redeemer makes present the Sacrifice of Calvary, offering Himself as a propitiatory sacrifice to the Father, *se ipsum offerens*. Christ offers Himself in the Sacrifice of the Mass through the ministry of the ordained priest at the altar who consecrates *in persona Christi*. In an important allocution delivered to the International Congress on Pastoral Liturgy, 22 September 1956, Pope Pius XII explained clearly how the essential sacrificial act, the consecration, in which the divine Redeemer is made present as a victim, is the action of Christ acting through the celebrant alone, and *not* of the entire congregation: "*Actio Christi cujus personam gerit sacerdos celebrans*". The action of the consecrating priest is the very action of Christ who acts through His minister. Once the divine Victim has been made present the entire congregation can join with the celebrant in offering Him to the Father. "But", Pope Pius explains, "this action is not '*actio ipsius Christi per sacer-*

dotem ipsius personam sustinentem et gerentem'". The Pope stressed the same point in his Encyclical *Mediator Dei* :

"The unbloody immolation by which, after the words of concentration have been pronounced, Christ is rendered present on the altar in the state of victim, is performed by the priest alone, and by the priest in so far as he acts in the name of Christ, not in so far as he represents the faithful".

This teaching is repeated by the Second Vatican Council, in the Declaration *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, in the 1979 *Holy Thursday Letter* of Pope John Paul II, and in his 1980 *Holy Thursday Letter, Dominicae Cena*. (6)

It will be useful to quote from *Dominicae Cena* to make it clear how closely Pope John Paul II adheres to the classical Catholic teaching as expounded by Pope Pius XII. The two Holy Thursday letters of the present Pope can be used to make a point-by-point refutation of the *Agreed Statements* on the Eucharist and Ministry. It is inconceivable that a Pope with such a profound grasp of the traditional teaching could ratify the evasive and ambiguous *ARCIC Statements*. Pope John Paul II teaches that :

"The priest offers the Holy Sacrifice *in persona Christi*; this means more than offering "in the name of" or "in the place of" Christ. *In persona* means in specific sacramental identification with 'the eternal High Priest' who is the Author and principal Subject of this Sacrifice of His, a Sacrifice in which, in truth, nobody can take His place. Only He—only Christ—was able and is always able to be the true and effective 'expiation for our sins and . . . for the sins of the whole world'. Only His Sacrifice—and no one else's—was able and is able to have a 'propitiatory power' before God, the Trinity, and the transcendent holiness. Awareness of this reality throws a certain light on the character and significance of the priest celebrant who, by confecting the Holy Sacrifice and acting *in persona Christi*, is sacramentally (and ineffably) brought into that most profound *sacredness*, and made part of it, spiritually

linking with it in turn all those participating in the Eucharistic assembly”.

In Protestant belief, the role of the ordained minister in the Eucharist is not *essentially* different from that of any member of the congregation. He is their representative, presiding over the assembly in their name. He is simply their spokesman or representative. He does nothing, and is able to do nothing, that could not be done by any one of them. He presides because, as the ordained minister, it is appropriate that he should do so, *not* because he possesses a special power which makes him the only person *able* to do so.

The second power imparted by ordination to the priesthood, that of absolving, has not yet been mentioned. It will be dealt with separately.

THE POSITION OF ARCIC

The ARCIC *Statement on the Ministry* nowhere affirms that:

- (a) A “character” is imprinted by ordination which means that
- (b) The ordained man differs not simply in degree but in essence from the unordained
- (c) And has powers which the unordained do not possess.

Dr. Charley’s interpretation of the Statement is that an ordained minister is:

“ . . . the most appropriate person to preside at the celebration of the Eucharist. The *Statement* says nothing about a ‘priestly character’ necessary for such a responsibility, by which an ordained man is empowered to do something which no layman can do. It speaks rather of what is right in the light of the nature of both the Eucharist and the ministry. The Lord’s people gather together around the Lord’s table. If the minister is the focus of the people’s unity, who could be more fitting to act as president?” (7)

Can we deduce from this that Dr. Charley upholds the classic Protestant position that, if the community thought it necessary, any member of the congregation could act as president; and that the ordained minister normally does

so as a matter of propriety and not necessity? The answer is definitely, "Yes". In a lecture delivered at London Colney (England) on 11 November, 1974 he was asked the following question:

"In your commentary on the *Canterbury Statement* you say: 'It says nothing about a priestly character by which an ordained man is empowered to do something which no layman can do'. From what you have said I take it you wouldn't want to say that anything happened to the bread and wine at the Consecration. So would you therefore say that this is something that a layman could do? Could a layman consecrate?" Dr. Charley replied:

"What the *Ministry Statement* makes quite explicit is that it is not as if there is a kind of magical—no, magical is an unfair, a loaded word—a kind of power which a certain person has to do something; that the work of the reality of the Eucharist is something that God does. But it is true at the same time that there is an appropriate person to do it. Now I think that if I'm honest and you were to push me over this, I would say that I believe that the ordained person—which is what we are saying in the *Ministry Statement*—who is there as the intentional focus-figure for the fellowship of Christ's Church, he is the right and appropriate person to be the celebrant at the Lord's Supper; because if the Lord's Supper is the focus of our unity, and the Ministry is to be the focal point of the leadership and so on of the life of the Church, then there is no one more appropriate . . . I'm sure there is a difference of opinion about this, about whether a layman can ever be in a position to be the celebrant: I fully appreciate that. I think I would have to say myself as an Evangelical, my own personal conviction is that I believe the right and proper person, because of Christ's intention for the Ministry, is the minister, that he ought to be the celebrant. *But I can find, if I'm honest, no ultimate theological reason why in exceptional circumstances a layman could not be the celebrant*".

We must be grateful to Dr. Charley for his frankness, both in his written commentary and in answering this

question at his lecture. What his testimony proves *beyond any possible doubt* is that *the Agreement on the Ministry is acceptable to a man who denies the existence of a priestly character conferred by ordination, denies the existence of special priestly powers which a layman does not possess, and believes that if the need arose a layman could celebrate the Eucharist.* In a Preface to this *Agreement* the Co-Chairmen of ARCIC, The Rt. Reverend H. R. McAdoo for the Anglican Communion, and Bishop Alan Clark for the Catholic Church, state: "Even though there may be differences of emphasis within our two traditions, yet we believe that in what is said here both Anglican and Roman Catholic will recognize their own faith". Well, the Anglican Co-Chairman had every right to say this, as any Protestant could recognize his own faith in this *Agreement*. It is a straightforward Protestant statement. But how any Catholic, least of all a Bishop, could claim to recognize the Catholic faith in this *Statement*, and expect us to accept him as a man of integrity, is a complete mystery. But even if, *per impossibile*, Bishop Clark had deluded himself into sincerely believing that this *Statement* did express the full Catholic teaching on the priesthood, he was certainly made aware of its deficiencies as a result of the very strong criticism from orthodox Catholics prompted by its publication. The *Statement* on the Ministry was published in 1973.

ELUCIDATIONS

The deficiencies which I have pointed out in this article were made known to the Catholic members of ARCIC by many priests and laymen, both in published articles and private letters. The Catholic members thus had every opportunity of insisting that the true Catholic position was affirmed, or of admitting publicly that no agreement could be reached. In 1979 ARCIC published *Elucidations*, which was intended to clarify the previous *Statements*. *Elucidations* proved conclusively, if further proof were needed, that the Catholic members of ARCIC were not willing to offend their Anglican colleagues by upholding authentic Catholic teaching on the priesthood. It is explained in *Elucidations* that:

"The *Statement* (para. 13) explains that the ordained ministry is called priestly principally because it has a particular sacramental relationship with Christ as High Priest. At the eucharist Christ's people do what he commanded in memory of himself and Christ unites them sacramentally with himself in his self-offering. But in this action it is only the ordained minister who presides at the eucharist, in which, in the name of Christ and on behalf of his Church, he recites the narrative of the institution of the Last Supper, and invokes the Holy Spirit upon the gifts".

Before commenting on this passage I will quote the words of Pope Pius XII in his Allocution of 2 November, 1954:

"There are some who have not ceased claiming a certain true power to sacrifice on the part of all, even laymen, who piously assist at the Sacrifice of the Mass. Opposing them, We must distinguish truth from error, and do away with all confusion. Seven years ago, in the Encyclical just quoted (*Mediator Dei*), We reproved the error of those who did not hesitate to state that Christ's command, 'do this in memory of Me', refers directly to the whole assembly of the faithful, and that only afterwards did a hierarchical priesthood follow. Hence, they say, the people possess a true sacerdotal power; the priest acts only as an authority delegated by the community. Wherefore they think that 'concelebration' is the true Eucharistic Sacrifice, and that it is more fitting for priests and people together to 'concelebrate' than to offer the Sacrifice in private, with no congregation present".

It is clear that the passage just quoted from *Elucidations* is fully compatible with the errors censured in the quotation from the Allocution of Pope Pius XII.

(1) It could be interpreted to mean that Christ's command "do this in memory of Me" was given to all the faithful.

(2) It could be interpreted to mean that the congregation and ordained minister "concelebrate" the Eucharist, with the minister simply presiding as "an authority delegated by the community".

(3) The *Statement* does say that the *minister* "recites the narrative in the name of Christ and on behalf of his Church", but it *studiously avoids* using the phrase "in the person of Christ". Every Protestant minister presides over the Eucharist in the name of Christ as well as that of the congregation, but a Catholic priest does more than *preside*, he does more than "*recite* the narrative of the Last Supper". A Catholic priest *consecrates in persona Christi*, he confects the sacrament.

The precision with which the language of *Elucidations* has been chosen to avoid affirming the Catholic position could not possibly be accidental or coincidental. This is equally manifest in the 'clarification' of the meaning of ordination which appears in *Elucidations*:

"Both traditions agree that a sacramental rite is a visible sign through which the grace of God is given by the Holy Spirit in the Church".

Some Catholics might be inclined to accept this definition as an adequate expression of the teaching of the Church; but in an article in the May 1980 issue of *Christian Order*, Professor van der Ploeg points out that the definition is not adequate as it uses the preposition "through" rather than "by". He explains:

"The ambiguity of this statement lies in the words 'through which' (not 'by which'), because of the various ways a Sacrament is thought to give grace: as *opus operatum*—by its own virtue; or as *opus operantis* (by virtue of him who receives the Sacrament). This latter is a Protestant doctrine".

The distinction to which Professor van der Ploeg refers is of considerable importance. The Catholic Church teaches that sacramental grace is derived only from the sacrament. This is referred to as the reception of grace *ex opere operato*. The grace made available is no way dependent upon the recipient of the sacrament. But the extent to which the sacramental grace produced by the sacrament will benefit its recipient is affected by his personal disposition. Thus these dispositions will decide whether a person makes a good confession or a bad confession, a good Communion or a bad Communion. The influence of the dispositions of the recipient upon the fruits of the sacrament is referred to as *ex opere operantis*.

It is of the very greatest importance to stress that *in no way at all* is the grace of a sacrament ever *produced ex opere operantis*. The source of grace is Christ Himself acting through His Sacraments. The dispositions of the recipient only help to determine the effectiveness of this grace in his particular case, in no way can they be the cause or the source of the grace which he receives.

As regards the Protestant position, it must be remembered that they reject the entire Catholic concept of grace, but there is no space here to explain the nature of their error. It must suffice to state that they deny that the sacraments *contain* the grace they signify, or that grace can be conferred *by the* sacraments. However, the performance of a sacramental rite can stir up and nourish the faith of an individual in much the same way as reading the Scriptures can. The Council of Trent anathematized the following propositions: the sacraments were instituted for the sake of nourishing faith alone; they do not contain the grace which they signify; grace is not conferred by the rite itself (*ex opere operato*), but that faith alone in the divine promises is sufficient to obtain grace.

Now to state that grace is given *through* the sacramental rite is in no way unorthodox—the phrase is even used by the Council of Trent, but within a context in which the *ex opere operato* doctrine is affirmed forcefully and frequently. The significance of the choice of *through* rather than *by* is that *through* is compatible with the heresy that the sacraments do not contain the grace that they signify, but *by* is not.

The quotation from *Elucidations* continues:

“The rite of ordination is one of these sacramental rites. Those who are ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands receive their ministry from Christ through those designated in the Church to hand it on; together with the office, they are given the grace needed for its fulfilment. Since New Testament times the Church has required such recognition and authorization for those who are to exercise the principal functions of *episcopo* (oversight) in the name of Christ. This is what both traditions mean by the sacramental rite or ordination”. Professor van der Ploeg comments:

"Again, these words have been chosen most carefully, if we except the last sentence, which is simply not true. Nowhere in this description is there any mention of grace given by *the sacrament of Order*: and the 'ministry' is equated with 'authority'; bishops (or priests) are 'designated' for their office; 'together' with this designation they receive grace. The Church 'recognizes them' and 'gives them authority' to exercise their function in the name of Christ. Through the use of these words the true Catholic doctrine is carefully avoided. What is said is not untrue; but from the Catholic standpoint it is essentially incomplete. It becomes untrue because it purports to give the 'substantial' doctrine of the Church in this matter: 'This is what both traditions mean by the sacramental rite of ordination' The text says that those who are ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands receive their ministry from Christ 'through those designated in the Church to hand it on'. Here the word 'designated' is insufficient since its primary meaning is of a juridical act and we are not told that it has another meaning as well: the consecrating bishop has not only to be *designated*, but also to be *ordained* (or *consecrated*) in the way the Catholic Church associates with and attaches to this word".

Professor van der Ploeg is even more severe in his critique of the claim: "Since New Testament times the Church has required such recognition and authorization for those who are to exercise the principal functions of *episcopate* in the name of Christ". He writes:

"Here we do not only disagree but protest. Ordination to the priesthood is not to be explained as an act of authority only, or as one of 'recognition' (of a grace already given). By his ordination the priest gets real power 'to offer and consecrate the true Body and Blood of the Lord, to forgive sins or not to forgive them' and his priesthood is not 'only an office' (*officium tantum*), as Trent has made clear and declared".

THE POWER TO ABSOLVE

The Council of Trent took great pains to make it clear that the forgiveness of sins when the words of absolution

are pronounced by a duly authorized priest is a real judicial pardon. The priest makes a judgement, and decides to forgive or retain the sins of the penitent. Some Protestant sects devised a rite resembling the Catholic Sacrament of Penance in which the minister informs the penitent that his sins have been forgiven. But there is no sacramental absolution on the part of the minister, there is no judicial sentence. He is simply reassuring and comforting the penitent by reminding him that God has forgiven his sins. Trent anathematized anyone who claimed that: "The sacramental absolution of the priest is not a judicial act, but a bare ministry of pronouncing and declaring sins to be forgiven to him who confesses; provided only he believe himself to be absolved". (Session XIV, Canon IX.)

The ARCIC *Statement on the Ministry* is totally compatible with this heresy which Trent anathematized. It explains:

"Authority to pronounce God's forgiveness of sin, given to bishops and presbyters at their ordination, is exercised by them to bring Christians to a closer communion with God and their fellow men through Christ, and to assure them of God's continuing love and mercy". (para. 11)

This is blatant Protestantism. When a Catholic priest is ordained he receives the *power* to *absolve* or *retain* the sins of the penitent. An ARCIC minister is given *authority* to *pronounce* God's forgiveness of sin. This is not even subtle, but if any doubt remains let Dr. Charley dispel it:

"The authority to pronounce God's forgiveness of sin should not be open to misconstruction. The relationship of such a ministry with the word of God is fundamental. The forgiveness is God's not ours, for sin is primarily an offence against God who alone therefore can offer pardon. As in the Anglican Prayer Book, where the absolution is either a prayer to God or a statement about God, so here the minister is simply said to 'pronounce' it".

What could be clearer? But should further clarification be needed, Dr. Charley provided it during the lecture which has already been cited. He was asked to comment

on the Catholic belief that absolution is a judicial act. He replied:

"In the (Anglican) Prayer Book the actual basis of the pronouncement of absolution is either in the petitionary form of a prayer that God will absolve, or it is a declaratory thing, that God absolves; not, though, that I absolve . . . If an offence is primarily against God, it is God who will forgive. But there is an authoritative Minister of Christ who has authority to say, *this* is what Christ says: "If you repent of your sins I will forgive you". I believe that as a preacher of the Gospel I can have declaratory authority in the name of Christ. But that's a different thing from saying that I forgive somebody's sins; but I believe that I can *declare* something with authority, on the authority of Christ as His representative". (My emphasis).

SACRIFICE AND REAL PRESENCE

The space available to me in this article precludes any detailed discussion of ARCIC's treatment of the Catholic doctrines of Sacrifice and the Real Presence. In his commentary on the *Canterbury Agreement* on the Ministry (p. 23) Dr. Charley observes with great satisfaction:

"The *Statement on the Eucharist* claimed to be a 'substantial agreement' from which, according to the Chairmen in the Preface, 'nothing essential has been omitted'. That *Statement* spoke explicitly of the sacrifice of Christ, *but it never described the Eucharist as a sacrifice*. Even a 'substantial agreement' did not require that. The present *Statement on the Ministry* is 'the consensus of the Commission on essential matters' (para. 17)". (My emphasis)

Well, there we have it. The Catholic members of ARCIC, including two bishops, are satisfied that they have reached a substantial agreement on the Eucharist, from which nothing *essential* has been omitted, without affirming that the Eucharist is a sacrifice as well as a sacrament. In order to affirm the Catholic doctrine fully it should be stated that it is a propitiatory sacrifice, and not simply a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving—something the Anglican Reformers were prepared to accept.

Another Anglican commentator, the Reverend Colin Buchanan, remarked that Thomas Cranmer, the apostate Archbishop of Canterbury, who was the principal author of the Anglican Prayer Book, could have signed the first *Agreed Statement on the Eucharist* while his (Catholic) opponents could not, and that his statements "about the presence of Christ in the Sacrament go very much with his use of language, and the footnote explaining away transubstantiation without committing anyone to it would have made him chortle". (8)

The language in the *Agreement on the Eucharist* concerning the Real Presence is well calculated to deceive Catholics with little knowledge of theology. Some of the Protestant Reformers used very realistic language regarding the reception of Christ in Holy Communion, and yet they totally rejected belief in any substantial change in the Eucharistic elements of bread and wine. The ARCIC *Statements* are totally consistent with such a rejection. Professor van der Ploeg comments:

"In *Elucidations* (No. 6) we read, 'His body and blood are given through the action of the Holy Spirit *appropriating* (our emphasis) bread and wine so that they become the food of the new creation already inaugurated by the coming of Christ'. This does not mean more than that the Holy Spirit takes possession in some way or other of the bread and wine, not that they cease to be bread and wine, having been substantially changed".

As the Reverend Colin Buchanan remarked, Cranmer could have signed the *Statement on the Eucharist*. Thomas Cranmer would never have signed any statement that could be interpreted as accepting a substantial presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

DEMOLISHING THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

What conclusions must we draw concerning the *Agreed Statements*? If we are objective we must conclude that the Catholic delegates no longer accept the teaching of the Council of Trent, and that these *Statements* are nothing less than an attempt to demolish the Catholic Church. Professor van der Ploeg writes:

"We ask the Catholic members of the Commission to read the doctrinal formulations of the Council of Trent. True, this Council was called as a bulwark against the Reformation of the sixteenth century; it is one of the major obstacles blocking the way to the modern ecumenist. We know that not a few 'Catholic' ecumenists would like to break it down; but we are not disposed to assist them in their work of demolishing the Catholic Church". (*Christian Order*, May 1980.)

How, then, must we regard the Catholic members of ARCIC? I will conclude by quoting Professor van der Ploeg. His strictures are severe, but his logic is inescapable. I agree with him completely:

"It is difficult to find Catholic doctrine better formulated than in the dogmatic canons of Trent: so much so that it is difficult or, indeed, impossible for anyone refusing to use them to keep the Catholic faith. (9) This, apart from the fact that every Catholic is bound to subscribe to them, so that anyone refusing explicitly to do so cannot be called a true Roman Catholic".

NOTES

1. Council of Trent, Session XXII, 17 September 1562 (DB 938, 961, 963); II Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium* 20, 21 22, *Christus Dominus* 2, 4, 6, *Presbyterorum Ordinis* 2; Declaration *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, 24 June 1973, 6; Pope John Paul II, *Letter to Priests*, Holy Thursday 1979, 4.
9. "It is intolerable that anyone on his own initiative should want to modify England.
3. Council of Florence, *Bulla unionis Armenorum, Exsultate Deo*, (DB. 695); II Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, 21; *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 2: Documents of the Synod of Bishops: 1. *The Ministerial Priesthood*, part one, 5, AAS 63 (1971), p. 907: *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, 6.
4. Pope Pius XII, Discourse on the Priesthood, 2 November, 1954: II Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, 10; Pope Paul VI, Encyclical *Mysterium Fidei*, 31: Declaration *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, 6; Pope John Paul II, *Letter to Priests*, Holy Thursday, 1979, 3.
5. *Pagan Servitude of the Church*.
6. II Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, 28; *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 2: *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, 6; *Letter to Priests*, Holy Thursday 1979, 3; *Letter, Dominicae Cena*, 1980.
7. *Agreement on the Doctrine of the Ministry*, p. 21.
8. C. Buchanan, *What did Cranmer think he was doing?* (Grove Books, Nottingham, England).
9. "It is intolerable that anyone on his own initiative should want to modify the formulas with which the Council of Trent has proposed the eucharistic mystery for belief. These formulas, and others too which the Church employs in proposing dogmas of faith, express concepts which are not tied to any specified cultural system. They are not restricted to any fixed development of the sciences nor to one or other of the theological schools. They present the perception which the human mind acquires from its universal, essential experience of reality and expresses by use of appropriate and certain terms borrowed from colloquial or literary language. They are, therefore, within the reach of everyone at all times and in all places". (*Mysterium Fidei*, para. 24).

Fog and Fudge

A LAYMAN'S VIEW

W. M. QUIRK

IT was in August 1950 that Pope Pius XII issued his far-sighted but much-neglected encyclical, *Humani Generis*, in which he uttered a grave warning about fallacious judgments in the sphere of religion and morals. After outlining some of the erroneous trends which could be detected in theological studies, he referred to the growing contempt for the Church's traditional system of philosophy and the effect which scientific hypothesis was having on the acceptance of certain truths of faith. All bishops and heads of religious orders were bidden in conscience to take every possible precaution against the utterance of these opinions and against their being passed on in any way either to clerics or to the faithful at large.

Not very many years were to pass before it became notorious that the precautions had been ineffectual. The proscribed opinions were being widely broadcast, not merely in ways outside the control of the Church authorities, but in Catholic institutions of all kinds and by individuals who nevertheless did not cease to be recognised as Catholic theologians or professors.

Amongst so much that makes sombre reading today, it is striking to read in the Pope's description of the aims of the errant theologians: "Privately they cherish the hope that dogma, stripped of the elements which they regard as external to divine revelation, may be usefully compared with the theological opinions of other bodies, separated from the unity of the Church. This might lead, by degrees, to a levelling-up between Catholic doctrine and the views of those who disagree with us".

A few weeks after the publication of *Humani Generis*, the Superior of the Catholic Missionary Society (Father John C. Heenan) recorded his view that the sense of the encyclical was that the dogmatic character of the Catholic Church should be increasingly stressed. The present task

of Catholics, he said, was to dissociate themselves from all other religions calling themselves Christian, though not, he emphasised, from other people calling themselves Christian.

Such a view did not, of course, prevail in the aftermath of the second Vatican Council and the confusions caused by the various manifestations of association between the Church and other Christian bodies are not far to seek. One particular source of confusion has been the "substantial agreement" repeatedly publicised over the past decade by official representatives of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission on important doctrinal topics (the Eucharist, the Ministry and Authority in the Church). How many Catholics have consequently ceased to be sure of what they are bound to profess in these matters, how many have simply lapsed into indifferentism, we shall never know.

However, at last in 1982, we have had a public response from Cardinal Ratzinger of the Sacred Congregation for the Defence of the Faith to these Agreed Statements from the Joint Commission. This document, with great courtesy and delicacy, makes it very clear that there is in fact no substantial agreement and that, in many important respects, the account of Catholic belief given in the Statements is inadequate. In parenthesis, it is interesting to recall that when *Faith* magazine made such points in its critique of the *Canterbury Statement*, it was banned from the bookshops of (irony of ironies) the Catholic Truth Society.

To quote Cardinal Heenan again, in 1961 he said: "It is essential to outline differences of doctrines before attempting to reconcile them". A blunter man than Cardinal Ratzinger might well have said that the Agreed Statements have fudged differences of doctrine rather than outlined them. Some may now be tempted to question whether it is really valuable to continue, as the Holy Office suggests, with further talks. It is, on the contrary, more important than ever. The Catholic participants have been served clear notice that nothing less than a faithful exposition of authentic doctrine will be accepted. The Anglicans have, in effect, been asked for some reconciliation of their stated beliefs with the Thirty-nine Articles and the Book of Common Prayer and with the actual beliefs of those they

represent. We can only hope that the probing will continue clear-sightedly and persistently until truth is served.

I well remember hearing in 1970 an acquaintance comment with some bitterness that it was impossible to have an ecumenical movement with the Roman Catholics. Such bitterness will inevitably be encountered more widely as it becomes clearer that Rome is not in the business of consenting to any levelling-down of Catholic doctrine to the views of those who disagree with us, but is intent, in this forum as in any other, on witnessing to the whole truth, as it finds currency in the Church, without disfigurement, without diminution (of *Humani Generis*, No. 43). That any contrary idea should have gained ground shows a great lack of charity on our part and is a matter for genuine regret; but it is the case. Readers will know only too well, for example, how representatives of the Reformed Churches detect a diminution of Eucharistic doctrine in the drastic revision of our age-old liturgy with the assistance of the Protestant "observers".

The same tendency was to be seen after the visit to this country of Pope John Paul in May. Amongst many commentaries that were genuinely appreciative and some that were merely anodyne, there were those which purported to find evidence that the Church had finally accepted the Reformation and that we were no longer divided by doctrine from Protestants. For those who had ears to hear, the Pope guarded against misinterpretation of his ecumenical contacts by his constant insistence on "unity in truth" and "unity according to the mind of Christ". Perhaps it was too much to hope that the media would always get it right when Catholics are often so quick to get it wrong. Within a few days of the Pope's departure from these shores, no fewer than three broadcasters, described as Catholics, had been heard to argue that the Pope's words on marriage indicated a change in the Church's moral teaching. Whether they were speaking in ignorance of all his previous reported utterances over the past few years or in disregard of them, their gross irresponsibility will in the end be of no service to unity.

At the beginning of April, the Observations of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on the Final Report of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) were communicated by this Dicastery to the Presidents of the Episcopal Conference and of the Patriarchal Synods of the Eastern Rite. This was intended as a contribution to the ongoing dialogue and in order that the faithful might more easily understand the ARCIC Final Report in the light of the fundamental principles of Catholic doctrine.

Final Report of Arcic: Observations

SACRED CONGREGATION FOR DOCTRINE OF
THE FAITH

A. OVERALL EVALUATION

THE Co-Chairmen of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) sent to His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, the Final Report of twelve years of the Commission's work on the questions of Eucharistic doctrine, ministry and ordination, and authority in the Church. At the request of the Holy Father, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has proceeded with a doctrinal examination of this Report, and its conclusions are set forth in the following observations.

1) The Congregation must first of all give full recognition to the positive aspects of the work accomplished by ARCIC in the course of twelve years of an ecumenical dialogue which is exemplary on several counts. Setting aside a sterile polemical mentality, the partners have engaged in a patient and exacting dialogue in order to overcome doctrinal difficulties which were frankly acknowledged, with a view to restoring full communion between the Catholic Church and

the Anglican Communion. This work achieved in common is a singular event in the history of the relations between the two Communion, and is at the same time a notable effort towards reconciliation. Worthy of particular note are :

i) The quality of the doctrinal rapprochement achieved, in a serious attempt at a converging interpretation of the values considered fundamental by both sides;

ii) The ambiguity of the phrase "substantial agreement". number of observations which the SCDF had previously made about the Windsor, Canterbury, and Venice statements, and has made an effort to respond satisfactorily in two series of elucidations on Eucharistic Doctrine—Ministry and Ordination (1979) and on Authority in the Church (1981).

2) The Congregation is obliged nevertheless to point out some negative aspects with regard to the method followed by ARCIC :

i) The first may be considered a minor point, although it is not without relevance for the document's readers : ARCIC has thought it unnecessary to revise the original statements; rather, it has left their adjustment to two series of elucidations. The result is a lack of harmony and homogeneity which could lead to different readings and to an unwarranted use of the Commission's texts.

The following aspects are more important, for even though they pertain to the method employed, they are not without doctrinal significance :

ii) The ambiguity of the phrase "substantial agreement". The English adjective could be taken to indicate nothing other than "real" or "genuine". But its translation, at least into languages of Latin origin as "substantiel", "sostanziale"—above all with the connotation of the word in Catholic theology—leads one to read into it a fundamental agreement about points which are truly essential (and one will see below that the SCDF has justified reservations in this regard).

Another source of ambiguity lies in the following fact : a comparison of three texts (Elucidations, Salisbury [1979], nos. 2 and 9; Authority in the Church I, Venice [1976], no. 26) shows that the agreement spoken of as "substantial",

while considered by ARCIC to be very extensive, is not yet complete. This does not permit one to know whether, in the eyes of the members of ARCIC, the differences which remain or the things which are missing from the document only deal with secondary points (for example, the structure of liturgical rites, theological opinion, ecclesiastical discipline, spirituality), or whether these are points which truly pertain to the faith. Whatever the case, the Congregation is obliged to observe that sometimes it is the second hypothesis which is verified (for example, Eucharistic adoration, papal primacy, the Marian dogmas), and that it would not be possible here to appeal to the "hierarchy, of truths" of which no. 11 of the Decree *Unitatis Redintegratio* of Vatican II speaks (cf. the Declaration *Mysterium Ecclesiae* no. 4 par. 3).

iii) The possibility of a twofold interpretation of the texts.

Certain formulations in the Report are not sufficiently explicit and hence can lend themselves to a twofold interpretation, in which both parties can find unchanged the expression of their own position.

This possibility of contrasting and ultimately incompatible readings of formulations which are apparently satisfactory to both sides gives rise to a question about the real consensus of the two Communions, pastors and faithful alike. In effect, if a formulation which has received the agreement of the experts can be diversely interpreted, how could it serve as a basis for reconciliation on the level of church life and practice?

Moreover, when the members of ARCIC speak about "the consensus we have reached" (cf. Eucharistic Doctrine, Windsor [1971], no. 1), one does not always see clearly whether this means the faith really professed by the two Communions in dialogue, or a conviction which the members of the Commission have reached and to which they want to bring their respective coreligionists.

In this regard it would have been useful—in order to evaluate the exact meaning of certain points of agreement—had the ARCIC indicated their position in reference to the documents which have contributed significantly to the formation of the Anglican identity (*The Thirty-nine Articles*

of Religion, Book of Common Prayer, Ordinal), in those cases where the assertions of the Final Report seem incompatible with these documents. The failure to take a stand on these texts can give rise to uncertainty about the exact meaning of the agreements reached.

The Congregation finally has to note that, from the Catholic point of view, there remain in the ARCIC Final Report a certain number of difficulties at the level of doctrinal formulations, some of which touch the very substance of the faith. These difficulties—their description and the reasons for them — will now be listed following the order of the new texts of the Final Report (Eucharistic Doctrine—Ministry and Ordination: Elucidations [Salisbury, 1979]; Authority in the Church II; Authority in the Church: an Elucidation [Windsor, 1981]).

B. DOCTRINAL DIFFICULTIES NOTED BY THE SCDF

I—Eucharist

(cf. *Elucidations*, Salisbury, 1979)

1) Eucharist as Sacrifice

In the Elucidations, no. 5, ARCIC has explained the reason for its use of the term *anamnesis* and has recognized as legitimate the specification of *anamnesis* as sacrifice, in reference to the Tradition of the Church and her liturgy. Nevertheless, in so far as this has been the object of controversy in the past, one cannot be satisfied with an explanation open to a reading which does not include an essential aspect of the mystery.

This text says as does the Windsor statement (no. 5), “the Church enters into the movement of (Christ’s) self-offering” and the Eucharistic memorial, which consists in “the making effective in the present of an event in the past”, is “the Church’s effectual proclamation of God’s mighty acts.” But one still asks oneself what is really meant by the words “the Church enters into the movement of (Christ’s) self-offering” and “the making effective in the present of an event in the past”. It would have been helpful, in order to permit Catholics to see their faith fully expressed on this point, to make clear that this real presence of the sacrifice of Christ, accomplished by the sacramental words, that is to say, by the ministry of the priest saying “in persona

Christi" the words of the Lord, includes a participation of the Church, the Body of Christ, in the sacrificial act of her Lord, so that she offers sacramentally in him and with him his sacrifice. Moreover, the propitiatory value that Catholic dogma attributes to the Eucharist, which is not mentioned by the ARCIC, is precisely that of this sacramental offering (cf. Council of Trent, DS 1743, 1753; John Paul II, Letter *Dominicae Coenae*, no. 8, par. 4).

2) Real Presence

One notes with satisfaction that several formulations clearly affirm the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament: for example, "Before the Eucharistic Prayer, to the question: 'What is that?', the believer answers: 'It is bread.' After the Eucharistic Prayer to the same question he answers: 'It is truly the body of Christ, the Bread of Life'" (Salisbury Elucidations, no. 6; cf. also Windsor Statement, nos. 6 and 10).

Certain other formulations, however, especially some of those which attempt to express the realization of this presence, do not seem to indicate adequately what the Church understands by "transsubstantiation" ("the wonderful and unique change of the whole substance of the bread into his body and of the whole substance of the wine into his blood, while only the species of bread and wine remain"—Council of Trent, DS 1925; cf. Paul VI, Encyclical *Mysterium Fidei*, AAS LVII 119651, p. 766).

It is true that the Windsor statement says in a footnote that this must be seen as "a mysterious and radical change" effected by "a change in the inner reality of the elements". But the same statement speaks in another place (no. 3) of a "sacramental presence *through bread and wine*", and Elucidations (no. 6b) says "His body and blood are given through the action of the Holy Spirit, *appropriating bread and wine* so that they become the food of the new creation." One also finds the expression: "the association of Christ's presence with the consecrated elements" (no. 7) and "the association of Christ's sacramental presence with the consecrated bread and wine" (no. 9). These formulations can be read with the understanding that, after the Eucharistic prayer the bread and wine remain such in their ontological substance, even while becoming the sacramental

meditation of the body and blood of Christ. (1) In the light of these observations, therefore, it seems necessary to say that the substantial agreement which ARCIC so carefully intended to present should receive even further clarification.

3) Reservation and Adoration of the Eucharist

Elucidations (no. 9) admits the possibility of a divergence not only in the practice of adoration of Christ in the reserved sacrament but also in the "theological judgements" relating to it. But the adoration rendered to the Blessed Sacrament is the object of a dogmatic definition in the Catholic Church (cf. Council of Trent, DS 1643, 1656). A question could arise here about the current status in the Anglican Communion of the regulation called the "Blank Rubric" of the *Book of Common Prayer*: ". . . the Sacramental Bread and Wine remain still in their natural substances and therefore may not be adored".

II—Ministry and Ordination (cf. *Elucidations*, Salisbury, 1979)

1) Ministerial Priesthood

Elucidations (no. 12) makes the distinction between the common priesthood of the people of God and the priesthood of the ordained ministry, and makes clear what the priest alone is able to do in the eucharistic action in the following manner: "it is only the ordained minister who presides at the eucharist, in which, in the name of Christ and on behalf of his Church, he recites the narrative of the institution of the Last Supper, and invokes the Holy Spirit upon the gifts". But this formulation only means that he is a priest in the sense of Catholic doctrine, if one understands that through him the Church offers sacramentally the sacrifice of Christ. Moreover, it has been previously observed that the document does not explicitate such a sacramental offering. Because the priestly nature of the ordained minister depends upon the sacrificial character of the Eucharist, lack of clarity on the latter point would render uncertain any real agreement on the former (cf. Council of Trent, DS 1740-1741, 1752, 1764, 1771; John Paul II. Letter *Dominicae Coenae*, no. 8, par. 4 and no. 9, par. 2).

2) **Sacramentality and Ordination**

ARCIC affirms the sacramental nature of the rite of ordination (no. 13), and further says that "Those who are ordained . . . receive their ministry from Christ through those designated in the Church to hand it on". Nevertheless, it does not state clearly enough that it is a tenet of the Church's faith—the possible difficulties of an historical proof notwithstanding—that the sacrament of Holy Orders was instituted by Christ: in effect note 4 of the Canterbury statement, which refers to the "*The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion*" (art. 25), allows one to infer that Anglicans recognize this institution only for the two "sacraments of the Gospel", that is, Baptism and Eucharist.

It may be noted here that the question bearing on the institution of the sacraments and on the way in which this can be known is intimately linked to the question of the interpretation of Holy Scripture. The fact of institution cannot be considered only within the limits of the certitude arrived at by the historical method; one must take into account the authentic interpretation of the Scriptures which it pertains to the Church to make.

3) **Ordination of Women**

As ARCIC has noted, since the 1973 Canterbury Statement there have been developments with regard to the ordination of women (cf. *Elucidations*, no. 15). The new canonical regulations which have recently been introduced on this point in some parts of the Anglican Communion, and about which she has been able to speak of a "slow but steady growth of a consensus of opinion" (cf. Letter of Dr. Coggan to Paul VI, 9 July 1975), are formally opposed to the "common traditions" of the two Communions. Furthermore, the obstacle thus created is of a doctrinal character, since the question whether one can or cannot be ordained is linked to the nature of the sacrament of Holy Orders. (2)

III—Authority in the Church

(Statement II, and an Elucidation, Windsor, 1981)

1) **Interpretation of the Petrine Text of the New Testament**

It is necessary to underline the importance of the fact that Anglicans recognize that "a primacy of the Bishop of Rome is not contrary to the New Testament, and is part of

God's purpose regarding the Church's unity and catholicity" (Authority II, no. 7).

Just as for the institution of the sacraments, however, one should keep in mind that it is not possible for the Church to adopt as the effective norm for reading the Scriptures only what historical criticism maintains, thus allowing the homogeneity of the developments which appear in Tradition to remain in doubt.

From this point of view, what ARCIC writes about the role of Peter ("a special position among the Twelve", no. 3; "a position of special importance", no. 5) does not measure up to the truth of faith as this has been understood by the Catholic Church, on the basis of the principal Petrine texts of the New Testament (Jn 1:42; 21:15; Mt -6:16—cf. DS 3053), and does not satisfy the requirements of the dogmatic statement of Vatican Council I: "the apostle Peter . . . received immediately and directly from Jesus Christ our Lord a true and proper primacy of jurisdiction" (Constitution *Pastor Aeternus*, chap. 1, DS 3055).

2) The Primacy and Jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome

In commenting on the "ius divinum" used by Vatican Council I in reference to the primacy of the Pope, the successor of Peter, ARCIC says that "it means at least that this primacy expresses God's purpose for his Church", and that it "need not to be taken to imply that the universal primacy as a permanent institution was directly founded by Jesus during his life on earth" (Authority II, no. 11). In so doing, ARCIC does not respect the exigencies of the word "institution" in the expression of Vatican Council I "by the institution of Christ our Lord himself" (Constitution *Pastor Aeternus*, chap. 2, DS 3058), which requires that Christ himself provided for the universal primacy.

In this perspective, one should note that ARCIC is not exact in interpreting Vatican Council II when it says that the "Council allows it to be said that a church out of communion with the Roman See might lack nothing from the viewpoint of the Roman Catholic Church except that it does not belong to the visible manifestation of full Christian communion which is maintained in the Roman Catholic Church" (no. 12). According to Catholic tradition, visible unity is not something extrinsic added to the particular

churches, which already would possess and realize in themselves the full essence of the Church; this unity pertains to the intimate structure of faith, permeating all its elements. For this reason the office of conserving, fostering and expressing this unity in accord with the Lord's will is a constitutive part of the very nature of the Church (cf. Jn 21:15-19). The power of jurisdiction over all the particular churches, therefore, is intrinsic (i.e. "iure divino") to this office, not something which belongs to it for human reasons nor in order to respond to historical needs. The Pope's "full, supreme and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered" (Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, no. 22; cf. DS 3064), which can take different forms according to historical exigencies, can never be lacking.

The ARCIC Report recognizes "that a universal primacy will be needed in a reunited Church" (Authority II, no. 9) in order to safeguard unity among the particular churches and that "in any future union a universal primacy . . . should be held" by the Bishop of Rome (cf. Authority I, no. 23). Such a recognition must be regarded as a significant fact in inter-church relations, but—as noted above—there remain important differences between Anglicans and Catholics concerning the *nature* of this primacy.

3) Infallibility and Indefectibility

One must not first of all that the term indefectibility, which ARCIC uses, is not equivalent to the term retained by the First Vatican Council (cf. Authority in the Church I, no. 18).

For ARCIC, the assurance the faithful have of the truth of the teaching of the Church's magisterium, in the last analysis, lies in the fidelity to the Gospel they recognize in it rather than in the authority of the person who expresses it (cf. Authority II, no. 27; Elucidation, no. 3).

The Commission points out in particular a divergence between the two Communions on the following point: "In spite of our agreement over the need of a universal primacy in a united Church, Anglicans do not accept the guaranteed possession of such a gift of divine assistance in judgement necessarily attached to the office of the bishop of Rome by virtue of which his formal decisions can be known to be

wholly assured before their reception by the faithful" (Authority II, no. 31).

As the above references show, agreement between the Anglican understanding of infallibility and the faith professed by Catholics has not yet been reached. ARCIC rightly insists that "the Church's teaching is proclaimed because it is true; it is not true simply because it has been proclaimed" (Authority II, no. 27). The term "infallibility", however, refers immediately not to truth but to certitude: for it says that the certitude of the Church about the truth of the Gospel is present without any doubt in the testimony of the successor of St. Peter when he exercises his office of "strengthening his brethren" (Lk 22:32; cf. Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, no 25; DS 3065, 3074).

Hence one can understand why ARCIC goes on to say that many Anglicans do not accept as dogmas of the Church the definitions of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whereas for the Catholic Church they are true and authentic dogmas which pertain to the fullness of faith.

4) General Councils

The Windsor Elucidation repeats something about which the SCDF has already presented a comment: "only those judgements of general councils are guaranteed to 'exclude what is erroneous' or are 'protected from error' which have as their content 'fundamental matters of faith' which 'formulate the central truths of salvation'..." (no. 3). It further accentuates the Venice statement by saying that far from implying that general councils cannot err, "the Commission... is well aware that they 'sometimes have erred'" (ibid.).

What is said here about general councils is not exact: the mission which the Church recognizes for the bishops united in council is not limited to "fundamental matters of faith"; it extends to the entire domain of faith and morals, where they are "teachers and judges" (cf. Vatican II, Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, no. 25). Moreover, the ARCIC text does not distinguish in the conciliar documents between what is truly defined and the other considerations which are found there.

5) "Reception"

Considering the case of a definition "ex cathedra" by

the Bishop of Rome, the Report (Authority II, no. 29) points out a difference between Catholic doctrine and the Anglican position: "Roman Catholics conclude that the judgement is preserved from error and the proposition true. If the definition proposed for assent were not manifestly a legitimate interpretation of biblical faith and in line with orthodox tradition, Anglicans would think it is a duty to reserve the reception of the definition for study and discussion".

On the other hand, when ARCIC treats of conciliar definitions and their reception, it speaks as though it had truly arrived at a formula of agreement by avoiding two extremes (Elucidation, no. 3). But this formula makes reception by the faithful a factor which must contribute, under the heading of an "ultimate" or "final indication", to the recognition of authority and value of the definition as a genuine expression of the faith (cf. also Authority II, no. 5).

If this is, according to the Report, the role of "reception", one must say that this theory is not in accord with Catholic teaching as expressed in the Constitution *Pastor Aeternus* of Vatican I, which says: "the divine Redeemer willed his Church to be endowed (with infallibility) in defining doctrine concerning faith and morals" (DS 3074), nor with the Constitution *Lumen Gentium* of Vatican II, according to which the bishops, assembled in ecumenical council, enjoy this infallibility, and their definitions call for the obedient assent of faith (cf. no. 25).

The Constitution *Dei Verbum* of Vatican II, no. 10, it is true, speaks of "a remarkable harmony" which is established "between the bishops and the faithful" in "maintaining, practising and professing the faith", but it also adds: "The task of authentically interpreting the word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. This teaching office is not above the word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, guarding it scrupulously, and explaining it faithfully by divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit; it draws from this one deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed."

C. OTHER POINTS IN VIEW OF FUTURE DIALOGUE

1) Apostolic Succession

This question has been at the centre of all ecumenical discussions and lies at the heart of the ecumenical problem; as a result it affects all of the questions treated by ARCIC : the reality of the Eucharist, the sacramentality of the priestly ministry, the nature of the Roman primacy.

The Final Report asserts a consensus on this point (cf. Canterbury Statement, no. 16), but we may ask whether the text itself provides a sufficient analysis of the question. This is a problem, then, which would deserve to be taken up again, studied more thoroughly, and above all confronted by the facts of church life and practice in the two Communion.

2) Moral Teaching

Quite properly, the dialogue conducted by ARCIC was focused on the three themes which have historically been the object of controversy between Catholics and Anglicans : "on the eucharist, on the meaning and function of ordained ministry, and on the nature and exercise of authority in the Church" (Introduction to the Final Report, no. 2).

But since the dialogue has as its final objective the restoration of church unity, it will necessarily have to be extended to all the points which constitute an obstacle to the restoration of that unity. Among these points it will be appropriate to give moral teaching an important place.

D. FINAL REMARKS

1) On the agreement reached in the Final Report of ARCIC

At the conclusion of its doctrinal examination, the SCDF thinks that the Final Report, which represents a notable ecumenical endeavour and a useful basis for further steps on the road to reconciliation between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion, does not yet constitute a substantial and explicit agreement on some essential elements of Catholic faith :

a) because the Report explicitly recognizes that one or another Catholic dogma is not accepted by our Anglican

brethren (for example, Eucharistic adoration, infallibility, the Marian dogmas);

b) because one or another Catholic doctrine is only accepted in part by our Anglican brethren (for example, the primacy of the Bishop of Rome);

c) because certain formulations in the Report are not explicit enough to ensure that they exclude interpretations not in harmony with the Catholic faith (for example, that which concerns the Eucharist as sacrifice, the Real Presence, the nature of the priesthood);

d) because certain affirmations in the Report are inexact and not acceptable as Catholic doctrine (for example, the relationship between the primacy and the structure of the Church, the doctrine of "reception");

e) finally because some important aspects of the teaching of the Catholic Church have either not been dealt with or have been only in an indirect way (for example, apostolic succession, the "regula fidei", moral teaching).

2) On the next concrete step to be taken

The SCDF thinks that the results of its examination would recommend :

a) that the dialogue be continued, since there are sufficient grounds for thinking its continuation will be fruitful;

b) that it be deepened in regard to the points already addressed where the results are not satisfactory;

c) that it be extended to new themes, particularly those which are necessary with a view to the restoration of full church unity between the two Communions.

1) One may also recall in this regard the Anglican-Lutheran statement of 1972, which reads : "Both Communions affirm the real presence of Christ in this sacrament, but neither seeks to define precisely how this happens. In the eucharistic action (including consecration) and reception, the bread and wine, while remaining bread and wine, become the means whereby Christ is truly present and gives himself to the communicants." (Report of the Anglican Lutheran International Conversations 1970-1972, authorized by the Lambeth Conference and the Lutheran World Federation, in *Lutheran World*, vol. XIX, 1972, p. 393).

2) In the Declaration *Inter Insigniores* of 15 October 1976, one will find the reasons for which the Church does not consider herself authorized to admit women to ordination to the priesthood. It is not a question of socio-cultural reasons, but rather of the "unbroken tradition throughout the history of the Church, universal in the East and in the West", which must be "considered to conform to God's plan for his Church" (cf. nos. 1 and 4).

JUST A THOUGHT

Did You mind when,
In order to improve it,
We took your perfect Sacrifice,
Up-dated it,
Translated it,
Re-stated it,
More economically,
More ecumenically,
More ambiguously,
Or did You prefer,
The Mass?

—*Patricia Runaghan*

Veneremur Cernui

ANDREW ROSS-WILLIAMSON

In God's Heaven the Angelic choirs were not replete,
On earth, human nature corrupted when the fruit did eat,
Serene the Holy Trinity transpires to choose a remedy,
unseen.

No parallel in all eternity forseen
But the Cross to raise that wasted nature to the skies
And break the ceaseless cry for death and make it wise.
"That man should live forever
But live for God and by God we determine and decree;"
Spoke the Holy Trinity.

And yet no sound was heard by angel choirs.
Adam's nature had recoiled under that blow
Dealt by Satan not so long ago.
The Father gazed upon the Son
The Holy Spirit made them One.
A Nature so delicate and rare
A Nature pleasing to Us One and Three
But where, but where, but where,
O Holy Trinity?
And yet no sound was heard by angel choirs.

From the Eternal Lamps Divine
A flicker of all graces fleets,
And behold passing the Eye Sublime
An Image seen before
Appears and greets those faithful followers of the
standard bearer

In awe,
Remains alone awful to behold,
The whole of human history to unfold—
But waits, united to the Trinity.
"This Nature that is to die upon the Cross
Is to be the Son's, He, He alone can brook no loss
To His Father's House and Their Eternal Union,
He, He shall be also broken in Communion.
For the Son can no pain know,

This Saviour's pain is Human only,
This scintillating Nature shall suffer woe
But He, My Son in Communion shall be Holy."

And yet, piercing the ages, O grief, O grief, this Nature
of Man
Shall descend the very depths of pain, the Lamb,
He the Son in form of Flesh
But He the Flesh this Jesus, Saviour,
Slaughtered once perhaps but more by incredulity and hate
Now in form of Bread—still bears the weight
On earth of penalties for crimes against His Very victory
Seat,
Without Atonement here below, we should be the chaff,
not wheat.
Without the presence of His Crucifixion,
This malicious and self-important generation.
Would have been swept away in consternation.
Do we suppose that God Incarnate could come and go
And leave us to recommend our bank accounts to grow.
De we suppose the Human Nature of Christ, made for
man to know,
Is quite happy watching from His darkened room the
millions
Passing on their way to woe ?
The Father vomits the lukewarm from His Mouth :
"See how they offend My only Spouse,
O Son this Nature you are about to take,
This time there shall be no mistake
But You, You alone shall be the Hero,
You My Jesus, My Son and Human Nature by My side
shall go,
Since I speak for all to know,
Centuries shall pass and time will almost cease
When Thou in appearance of Bread, shall be loved by all
Thy brethren
In Thy Virgin Mother's Peace !"

Just below, in the form of a foreword, I print a letter written to me on June 12th of this year by a layman — a Catholic parent and father whose home is in the North-East— in which he expresses the frustration felt by so many like himself at the state of affairs within the Church in this country. I have received many such letters.

Out of my deep respect for him and so many like him, who are the real strength of the Church in this country, I have decided to publish Mr. Darroch's "Open letter to the Bishops of England and Wales". I do this after careful consideration and in the hope, not only that notice will be taken of what he says, but that effective action will follow.
— Paul Crane, S.J.

Letter to the Bishops of England and Wales

A LAYMAN SPEAKS

FOREWORD

I ATTENDED Mass on the 5th Sunday of Easter with, I must confess, the usual lack of enthusiasm that I have for our Sunday services these days. I have no love for the new rite of Mass. I attend merely to satisfy my Sunday obligation and as a parental duty in respect of my children. This particular week, however, the words of the Gospel made a tremendous impression on me. Here, I thought, was the explanation for the disarray within the Church. We have gone astray because we no longer listen to the truth of Jesus Christ. For the remainder of Mass I could think of nothing else but the words of the Gospel and indeed for the next week or two these thoughts kept recurring in my mind. I decided to gather my thoughts in the form of a letter to the episcopate of England and Wales.

You may think I have been too severe in my criticism of the bishops but can one be too critical of anyone who is destroying, either actively or passively, the one true Church of Christ. I think not. You may consider that there is nothing new or original in what I have to say or that my letter has no particular merit, that is for you to decide. I can only say that the sentiments I have expressed are endorsed to a greater or lesser degree, by many of my friends and acquaintances who are heartily sick of the present situation, particularly in our supposedly Catholic schools where our children are being subject to the most appalling rubbish under the guise of Catholic doctrine.

My Lord Bishops,

You may be concerned, privately if not publicly, about the alarming decline in the fortunes of the Catholic Church in the years following the Second Vatican Council; which decline has gathered apace in recent years. You may even on occasion ponder as to the reasons for this truly sad decline. May I suggest that if you are indeed concerned about —

- a) the ominous drop in attendance at Mass,
- b) the catastrophic slump in vocations to the priesthood and religious life and
- c) the ever growing chorus of Catholic parents complaining about the abysmal quality of RE teaching in our Catholic schools,

you should examine closely the Gospel of the 5th Sunday of Easter (John 15: 1-8). The answer is possibly contained therein.

Jesus said to His disciples—

“I am the true vine,

and My Father is the vinedresser.

Every branch in Me that bears no fruit

He cuts away,

and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes
to make it bear even more . . .

I am the vine,

you are the branches.

Whoever remains in Me, with Me in him,

bears fruit in plenty;

for cut off from Me you can do nothing.

Anyone who does not remain in Me
is like a branch that has been thrown away
—he withers.”

A great number of our hierarchy since Vatican II have, to a greater or lesser degree, cut themselves off from the real truth of Christ in favour of the truth and cult of man. Let us examine closely the words of Jesus Christ. What did He say ?

“Whoever remains in Me, with Me in him
bears fruit in plenty;
Anyone who does not remain in Me
is like a branch that has been thrown away
he withers.”

Questions and a Contrast

The questions come to mind. Why are our seminaries and religious houses virtually empty and closing ? Why are the numbers attending Sunday Mass declining at such an alarming rate ? Why are Catholic parents removing their children from supposed Catholic schools ? And, equally importantly, why is it that these things are going on unchecked, with those in authority apparently unconcerned ? Can it be, as I suggest, my Lords, that in recent years you have cut yourselves off from the real truth of Christ, the true vine ? Instead of nourishing your flocks with the fruit of the true vine have you not been dispensing “vin ordinaire” or even, in many instances, plain unpalatable vinegar. You virtually admit as much in the *Novus Ordo Missae*. Has not the fruit of the true vine now become ‘the work of human hands’. A plague has descended and now the vineyard is being stripped bare. It has to be said that you, the episcopate, as guardians of the vineyard are solely responsible for its deterioration.

Collegiality and its Misuse

I hope you will forgive me if at this point I make mention of a certain Archbishop. This particular prelate is not “in good standing” amongst yourselves, but it is an undeniable fact that his seminaries are full to capacity and he has to open more and more to accommodate all the young men who wish to study under him. His problem is not the lack of vocations, as in the “post-Conciliar” Church,

but in coping with the steady stream of applications that he continually receives. Does this not prove that there are still many young men who are keen and eager to give their lives in the service of Jesus Christ in the priesthood? They are surely attracted to the truth which is manifest in the person of this particular Archbishop. Can it possibly be that he has remained in Christ and Christ has remained in him and as a natural consequence he is bearing fruit in plenty? I make the point and say no more.

I do not think you need to be reminded that you are the natural successors of the Apostles because it was one of the central themes of Vatican II. The heart of the schema *De Ecclesia* was the relation of the bishops and the Pope in the government of the Church. The Council Fathers in the form of the episcopate made it perfectly plain that their intention was to strengthen their own role within the Church. The College of Bishops was to be a new power, a new force to be reckoned with. But what, in fact, has been the result? It is patently obvious to even the simplest soul that, instead of collegiality giving you more power, which was the prime object of the exercise, you have in fact stripped yourselves of most of the individual authority you had in the first place. As individuals you are now hamstrung by decisions with which you may profoundly disagree. How can any bishop possibly exercise his legitimate authority in his own diocese under these kind of constraints? Your delusions of grandeur have turned out to be merely that—delusions.

Comparison and Cambodia

You insist on obedience from your priests and laity in respect of decisions arrived at under the mantle of collegiality. But surely, my Lords, there are well defined limits to the authority of the College of Bishops? But how many times in recent years have you exceeded these limits and abused your authority? I will illustrate my point with the following two examples. These two decisions were taken by the entire college of bishops with the Pope at their head and therefore I presume binding on all of you.

- (1) "The use of the Latin language is, except in special circumstances, to be maintained in the Latin rites."

—extract from “General Principles of the Liturgical Reform Approved by the Council”.

- (2) “The Apostolic See strongly urges bishops priests and people to observe zealously this law (Communion on the tongue) valid and again confirmed, according to the judgement of the majority of the Catholic episcopate.”

—*Memoriale Domini*, 1969.

What has happened since ? Individual groups of bishops, presumably under their own interpretation of collegiality (a kind of mini-collegiality perhaps), have overturned these decisions to suit their own purposes. As a consequence of which, we the unfortunate laity are now suffering from banal vernacular parodies of the *Novus Ordo Missae* and witness times without number the desecration of the Blessed Sacrament as the Sacred Species is casually passed from hand to hand by anyone, it seems, except the ordained priest.

Surely you can see, my Lords that each time you overturn a decision of the majority to suit the whim of a minority, all, incidentally, under the guise of collegiality, you are reducing the principle of collegiality to the level of a farce. How can you presume to demand obedience from anyone when you yourselves are seen to behave thus, when you appear to so many of us as disregarding the teaching of the Holy Father himself. Your own maxim appears to be “do as we say” rather than “do as we do”. You seem to have conveniently (or deliberately) forgotten the following :

“But the college or body of bishops has no authority unless it is understood together with the Roman Pontiff, the successor of Peter, at its head. The Pope’s power of primacy over all, both pastors and faithful, remains whole and intact. In virtue of his office, that is as Vicar of Christ and pastor of the whole Church, the Roman Pontiff has full, supreme and universal power over the Church”.

—*The Constitution of the Church*; Article 22, chapter III promulgated 21st Nov., 1964.

A New Cruelty

May I ask, my Lords, at what point in time, at which stage in our renewal will you be satisfied that the aims of Vatican II have been met? It seems to me that you are all following in the spiritual sphere a doctrine similar to that practised physically in all too recent times in Cambodia. That particular regime decided that the only way for Cambodia to "progress" was to begin afresh, to undergo renewal, to return to a more primitive lifestyle. In order to achieve this end they destroyed the cities, the temples and the schools. Age-old traditions were cruelly suppressed. Anyone and everyone who opposed this renewal was purged. The people were driven from their homes into the inhospitable countryside where millions perished in the wilderness through starvation and disease. The result was the creation of a wasteland. These most happy and cheerful people of South East Asia underwent the most terrible and horrific catastrophe and were decimated. The tragedy being all the greater because it was inflicted by their own people, from within.

How can I possibly suggest such a parallel with the Catholic Church, I hear you all ask in horror. Well, my Lords, have you not decided that we must all be renewed whether we like it or not, no matter what the cost in lost and despairing souls, for whom you appear to care little? In order to force through this renewal and return to more primitive forms have you not swept away virtually all the traditions of our Church and everything that was once considered sacred and holy? Have you not destroyed our Catholic churches and replaced them with meeting halls for the assembly bereft in many instances of any trace of the reserved Blessed Sacrament? Have you not ripped out of our sanctuaries the altar of God and replaced it with the "table of the bread" (*Inaestimabile Donum*)? Have you not brutally suppressed the immemorial Mass and replaced it with what appears to many as an ecumenical prayer service, with its all too obvious emphasis on the human rather than the divine. Are you not rapidly destroying our Catholic schools by letting all the established Catholic values go by default and introducing a new catechetics unrecognisable to most of us parents reared on the old penny catechism? Have you not removed from all

positions of influence and authority those persons who are not wholeheartedly in favour of this "renewal", thus eliminating all opposition to yourselves from within diocesan and national commissions, the Catholic media and so on? As a result of this so-called "renewal", have you not driven from our churches thousands of the faithful because they could no longer stomach the sheer liturgical drivel being foisted upon them in the name of the Novus Ordo, of the Mass, and, in consequence, have you not created a spiritual wasteland?

It Is Not Too Late

You have introduced a new cruelty into our Church in the form of a cynical and calculated deprivation. Are you not supposed to look after and care for all of your sheep and not only those who agree with you? Is your charity reserved only for your sycophants? There is certainly precious little elsewhere. Pope Paul VI in his opening address before the Fourth Session of the Council on 14th September, 1965 said:

"This is what the Council says: The Church is a society founded on love and governed by love. What they will say of the Church, of the Second Vatican Council, is that she loved, loved with a heart filled with missionary zeal". Where is this love? Where is this missionary zeal? It appears to so many of us that these words have been ignored as cynically and contemptuously as the decrees of the Council itself.

You will all be familiar, no doubt, with these words of Abraham Lincoln.

"You can fool all the people some of the time,
Some of the people all of the time,
But not all of the people all of the time".

These sentiments of Mr. Lincoln can certainly be applied to the Catholic (sorry, Conciliar) Church of the last 20 years. It is quite obvious that nearly all of the people, especially in the heady days of the Council, were fooled for a short time at least. It is also quite obvious that some of the people are still being fooled by this "brave new conciliar world". But it is glaringly obvious that most of the people realise a long time ago that they were being fooled by false promises and what I can only call the duplicity

and the hypocrisy that have followed in the wake of the Second Vatican Council.

Even at this desperate hour for the Church it is still not too late for you to retrieve the situation. Did you not notice how the people responded to Pope John Paul during his recent visit to these shores, even when he re-affirmed some very hard truths; how they applauded when he condemned abortion, divorce, promiscuity and drug abuse, subjects on which you yourselves have been conspicuously silent? Did you not notice how he always gave Communion on the tongue in the traditional Catholic manner and how, at Westminster Cathedral, the inspiring and joyful singing of the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, etc. by the people gave lie to the notion, prevalent amongst yourselves, that nobody wants Gregorian Chant any more? Did you take notice that Pope John Paul always gave his blessing in Latin, the mother tongue of the Church, possibly a reminder to you all to maintain the use of the universal language of the Church? Were you listening when he said the clergy and religious must always dress the part so that they may be recognisable and accessible to anyone in spiritual need and that priests must celebrate the Mass with understanding and reverence.

The bishops in Ireland have failed lamentably to capitalise and build on the Pope's visit to their unhappy land. The situation there of the Church is, if anything, even worse than before. Let us hope that you, my Lords, in England and Wales can learn from their mistakes and seize this unique opportunity to restore peace and harmony and justice once more to our Church. Your people have demonstrated quite clearly that they want to hear the truth of Christ. It is your bounden duty to preach the truth. Jesus said, "Whoever remains in Me, with Me in him bears fruit in plenty." You can have no finer guarantee than that. The future of the Catholic Church in this country is, quite literally, in your hands. You must not fail.

Yours faithfully,

L. Darroch.

Not long ago, on a visit to Ghana, Father Crane set down some of the thoughts which had long been his concerning the African Continent, but which he now finds himself sharing with Ghanaian and other friends of his in some of the other African countries that he knows. He hopes what is written below will prove of interest to readers of *Christian Order*.

CURRENT COMMENT

Second Thoughts in Africa

THE EDITOR

AT the outset, it is perhaps worth noting the “in” as distinct from “on” in the title. The reason is not that I happen to be in Ghana at the time of writing. The preposition employed is not subjective in that sense. Its employment denotes that the second thoughts are not merely those of myself as an outside observer but, rather, found within Africa itself and, indeed, shared by myself. The mental stirrings are there. The experience of what has been, in some countries, a relatively stormy past is now the subject of reflexion and reassessment in some quarters of the African Continent. This is significant. From a personal angle, I find it gratifying, for I have long held some of the views that are nowadays increasingly finding expression, at least in some of those countries of Africa with which I am acquainted. Let me try and explain.

The First Break-through

Years ago—in the early fifties, it not before—when I first got interested in what is best described as Africa south of the Sahara, the thing I feared most was that, with the coming of independence, the countries I know in Africa

would have their own equivalent of the Industrial Revolution that Britain and other European countries had been through; that, in their turn, these countries would experience the social horrors and the human devastation that my own country had undergone. Working as I was at the time with the Catholic Social Guild in Britain, I did what I could to make available to those in Africa who were interested, pamphlets and other literature dealing in simple form and language with the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church.

Readers will forgive the biographical note. I have introduced it simply to place what I have to say in its appropriate context. This article is not about what I have tried to do in Africa in my own pint-sized way. It is, rather, about a healthy evolution of thought that appears to be taking place in Africa and its relevance for that Continent's future. The most significant thing, which is increasingly manifest, is the disappearance of the false dualism that characterised so much of the Church's thinking, not merely in the developed, but in the developing countries as well. It would be an exaggeration to say that, not so long ago, man was viewed by what we called in those days "the Missionary Church", as compartmented. That would be a distortion. It would be correct, however, to say that what you might call "the mission outlook" of those days concentrated on the spiritual side of man, at times to the almost total exclusion of the material; the soul was seen as something to be taken care of, yet with quite insufficient realization of that intertwining of soul and body, which makes the well-being of the latter essential to the healthy functioning of the former. Man's salvation remains and always will remain the primary objective of the Church's striving wherever she may be. It must so remain because it is the reason for the Church's existence; but, precisely because man is made up of body and soul—interwoven as the two are to make man the human person that he is—the salvation process lays on the Church the obligation of working for the well-being of his body as well as his soul. You cannot, in fact, work as you should for the one, except that you work for the other, for, as is now increasingly realised, without a minimum, at least, of bodily well-being, man can only function as *half* a person;

not as the *whole*, which his co-operation with God in the work of his own salvation and that of others, demands. It follows that the Church has laid on her the obligation—ancillary but essential to the salvation process—of working for those social, economic and, indeed, political conditions that contribute to the material well-being of men and, therefore, to their salvation. Words spoken by Pope John Paul II to the gathering of Jesuit Provincials at Rome in February of this year are relevant in this context :

“If one takes account of the true demands of the Gospel and at the same time of the influence which social conditions exercise on Christian living, one easily understands why the Church considers the promotion of justice as an *integral part of evangelization*.”

(Italics mine)

The realization of this obligation is the break-through that has come in Africa, as indeed it has come or is in process of coming elsewhere in the Church today. It is of great significance.

The Second Break-through

With the realization of this obligation, there has come a new concern for the material and social, as well as the spiritual condition of the people, the two being seen, rightly, as interrelated. This has led to increasing questioning, within the Church in Africa and outside it, of the new post-independence industrialization, which is drawing the people of the countryside, particularly the young, by the thousand into the slums and shanty towns of the cities to serve the new machines placed there, as often as not, by the multinationals in search of cheap labour and profits and, as often as not, as the behest of the countries concerned, whose “top black elites” do very well out of such deals, serving as so many “black fronts” for the white controllers, who are increasingly in charge of their countries. The bribery and corruption consequent on the interplay between black and white in this kind of situation reaches, at times, horrific proportions.

I would like to reproduce here a passage from an article I published in *Christian Order* approximately a year and a half ago. It gives an idea of the magnitude of the current inpouring into the cities of the Third World :

"Recently, there was held in Rome a Conference to which delegates came from 47 out of the estimated 60 cities of the world, which are estimated by the end of the century to have populations exceeding 5 million (*Times* 3/9/80). At that Conference, Mr. Rafael Salas, Executive Director of the United Nations for Population Activities, estimated that, by the year 2000, Mexico City will be the world's largest capital, with a population of 31 million, making it larger than the whole of Scandinavia, with the Irish Republic thrown in for good measure. Reporting on the Conference, Peter Nichols, the *Times* correspondent wrote :

"In 1950 there were only six cities with populations of 5 million or more and their combined population was only 44 million. By 1980, this had risen to 26 such cities with a combined population of 252 million. By the year 2000, indications are that this number will rise to about 60 cities with an estimated total population of 650 million.

"Thirty years ago only Shanghai had a population of more than five millions among cities in less developed countries. By the year 2000 there will be 45 cities, mostly in Asia, with this number of people.

"It is estimated that in the next two decades more than 600 million people will be added to the work force in the less developed countries alone, with most of them flocking to the cities for jobs."

The problems presented by this inpouring are presented most vividly in, for example, Nairobi's Mathare Valley, which I have visited and seen with my own eyes. There you have living some 90,000 people who have come in from the countryside, crowded into a sprawling collection of what are best described as outsize dog-kennels; thrown-ups and lean-tos put together out of bits and pieces of corrugated and sacking, tins and battered planking, unfit utterly for human habitation. There is, in the Valley, no running water, no electricity, no sanitation. The young men who exist there—with or without their families—sleep, in the case of the unmarried, seven crammed side-by-side on the floor of a room for which, in all probability, they pay an exorbitant rent. From it they go, at 5 or 6 in the morning, clambering into buses that deposit them in the industrial

centre of the city. From there—the walk to the factory; the day spent working; the walk back to the bus that takes them home to Mathare, which they reach, I suppose, round about 6 or 7 in the evening. This is their day, not only at Mathare, but in similar areas under similar conditions in other of Africa's large and growing cities.

There are three Catholic parishes in the Mathare area staffed by devoted Holy Ghost, Holy Cross and White Fathers. Their work is heroic and devoted, but those who do it would be the first to say, I imagine, that it is at the best remedial, devoted patching in a situation which, of its nature, makes *human* living relatively impossible without the permanent practice of heroic virtue; and that should be demanded of no man or woman as the normal prerequisite of a human life. How, under such adverse circumstances, can a human being co-operate effectively with God in the work of his own salvation and that of his fellowmen? The answer is that he cannot. It follows that the adverse circumstances must be removed and that the Church, which is concerned primarily with man's salvation, is under obligation to work for their removal.

It is hardly to be wondered at that, given the appalling circumstances in which Africa's marginalized city poor live, eyes should be turned once again to the countryside, not only by the Church but, to a lesser extent, by central and local-government authorities. The long-term remedy for the situation that presses on the proletariat in Africa's cities is not to be found primarily within the cities themselves, but in the countryside from which they have come with such high hopes, only to find their dignity degraded, themselves flattened under a mountain of blighted dreams. Small wonder that eyes in the Church in Africa are being turned once more to the credit union; that the work of brave pioneers, who enjoyed at first and for the most part little more than a beneficent tolerance from African Church Authorities, is realised increasingly now as holding the key to Africa's future. The machinery is there; the foundations have been laid by men like Bartholomew Quainoo—a former student of Claver House—who built up magnificently the structure and work of ACOSCA during the eight years that this Pan-African Organization was fortunate enough to have him as its Secretary-General. This is not to say that

the credit-union — the co-operative savings and lending group—is the sole answer to the vast problem of Africa's city-poor; but it does hold the key to the answer, which must be sought in the co-operative effort of African agricultural producers, working and saving and marketing together, thereby building living communities in rural Africa out of which small, efficient and effective industries —based largely on agriculture and processing its products— can come.

This I am convinced, as I have been for many years, is the way ahead for the African Continent. I do not write these words in a sudden fit of enthusiasm. They express the thoughts that have been to the fore in my mind for many years. The cross-imposition on any African people of multinational, monopoly capitalism can only bring disaster to them. If you do not believe me, go into the slums of Nairobi, Lagos or Accra and see for yourself. The disaster is there now and the degraded city proletariats of Africa's cities stand in glaring witness to the cruelty of its incidence. No more can salvation be found in centralized authoritarian rule, particularly when exercised by a military government. The result in almost every case is in terms of check-points on the roads, the breakdown of transport and permanent shortages — sometimes to vanishing-point — of the basic essentials of life. As I see it, there is only one way through for Africa south of the Sahara and that is in terms of a co-operative or sharing society; which is *in no way* a socialist society, but which is not far from an African's mind when he does talk idealistically of a Socialist Society or of African Socialism as his goal. (The problem here is largely one of semantics). Again, as I see it, the co-operative or sharing society is one that flowers best from a credit-union base. It is for this reason that I have taken every opportunity in the past to encourage credit-union development in Africa South. It is for this reason that I rejoice to see a renewed interest now in the furtherance of this movement, particularly in the rural areas of those African countries with which I have some acquaintance. Africa will never be a Socialist Society. It has to be a Sharing Society or perish. Anything else, in my view, is hallucination; pipe-dreaming and no more.

The Catholic Church in Africa should be proud that—

through the efforts of a few dedicated priests and laymen—she is seen as a pioneer in this field. At the same time, the Authorities of the Church in Africa should realise that the few who led the way in the credit-union and co-operative field in Africa South, did so largely without her official support. They looked further than she did. What she sees now, they saw years ago. Let Church Authorities in Africa South realise this fact now, lean on the advice of those who led the way in this field and support generously and as *a matter of urgency* the efforts they and their successors are making now in this field. The time is short. Recognition now by the Church that it is so, and of the work that has to be done in the time that remains, constitutes what I would call the second break-through in official-church-thinking at the present time in the Africa I know. It follows hard on the heels of the first break-through, which is of the Church's obligations in the social field. In Africa today—and, I would say, the developing world generally—recognition of the rural need and the opportunity of meeting it through the credit-union and co-operative constitutes the second break-through; best seen as bringing to the first effective, concrete expression.

By Way of Corollary

At this stage, there is a point that needs to be noted by way of corollary. It is that a great deal of the Church's work in Africa's rural areas, which still add up in very many instances to little more than sparsely populated bush, has been done hitherto and will continue to be done by Catechists. They are, in a sense, the forgotten ones in Africa today. They should not be at this stage or ever in the future. For their work is vital, not only because of the Faith they teach and practice, but also because of the village development projects, for which they are increasingly known now for what they are—Christian Community Leaders. The title is a good one and suits the realities of the age in which we live and the new tasks which these Leaders are making their own unobtrusively, but effectively. They need help if their fine work is to grow and develop as it should. They are the natural animators of the credit-union and co-operative structure, which holds the key to Africa's future development. The trouble is that, at the

time when it is most needed, these Community Leaders—so vital an arm in the developing world of Africa South and elsewhere—are not receiving the help they must receive, if they are to do effectively the work that is so obviously theirs. I am referring not only to difficulties of transport, which can be appalling and could be met out of the tiniest fraction of the amount of overseas aid, which the Church in Africa South receives. I am referring also to the fact that they are in most cases badly underpaid, either because the money is not there or—perhaps more likely—because too low a priority is still given to their all-important work. For the picture against which too many of them are still thought of as working is that of the past—the magnificent old man of twenty or thirty years ago, a tattered ex-army greatcoat around him, grey-bearded and with a rosary round his neck, staff in hand, barefoot or sandled, on his way. I write from what I met nearly twenty-five years ago in Africa. That day has gone long since. The trouble is that it has not gone from the minds of too many Church Authorities, with the result that the salaries of so many who serve the Church so well are in no way what they should be. Surely this has to stop, not merely as a matter of simple justice, which is the first priority here as elsewhere, but if the work of the future in the countryside is to be done as it should, or even, at all.

The Third Break-through

The third break-through in African thinking within the Church is by no means complete. I think that it is on the way. It is not disconnected with the first two break-throughs, already considered. I would suggest it as that of the priest seen increasingly and rightly not as apart from the people, always talking *at* them, so to say; but, rather, as moving *with* them; not following, but leading them in this way. The process will speed up as rural need bulks larger in the vision of clergy and religious schooled in the true radicalism of the Church's Social Teaching. I see them as coming to the beginnings of a realization of Africa's credit-union and co-operative future, well acquainted with the necessary technical and administrative techniques—these can be grasped quickly enough—that will take them into the movement; above all and essentially,

possessed of the zeal that will enable them so to be taken. This way they will become part of the people they serve for Christ's sake, without ever losing their identity as priests; and their life-style will change to suit the new mode of life that is theirs; no longer apart from and above the people, but quietly with them, seeing their work in the countryside for what it is — ancillary to, but an essential ingredient in the work of evangelization, which is the Church's primary concern. There is no need to say that the work the seminary has to play in moulding priests in Africa to suit what I think of as the Continent's agricultural future, as I have tried to describe it, is of vital importance.

I believe that if the priests engage themselves in the way suggested in the countryside and their counterparts in the cities match this with a like concern for the poor already drawn into the shanty towns of the overcrowded cities, standing always in defence of the dignity of the poorest, the effect on the rising generation in Africa South will be profound. For the members of this generation are, I believe, already in process of being adversely affected, where their attitude to the Church is concerned, by the dualism already touched on at the outset of this article. Hopefully, it is now of the past, but it still lingers large in the minds of Africa's young as it does in the minds of their counterparts in the developed world. So often, the young in Africa South as elsewhere see the priest as a man apart from themselves, a functionary possessed of a life-style that puts him above themselves; for that reason approachable only on his terms and not on theirs; an upholder of formulae rather than the Faith, and with whom, in fact, there is little or no communication. I am talking of appearances, not necessarily of fact, but I believe there is a considerable substance of truth in what I say. The situation in this regard is not yet as critical in Africa as it is in Europe and the West. There the drift of the young from the Church is devastating. Its beginning, I believe, is in process in Africa South. There, as in Europe, the young want to know the reason for what appears too often to them, justly or unjustly, as no more than a clerical caste whose life-style would seem to place them apart from and above not themselves alone, but the marginalized poor and

the neglected; tending them, certainly, when in need of the Sacraments, but never, for Christ's sake, making brothers and sisters of the poorest by what they *are* and *do*, as well as by what they say. The sight of the priest in Africa working *with* the people as well as *for* them will do much to halt the drift of Africa's young from the Church; checking it before it becomes irreversible.

Realisation of the Supernatural

It would be quite wrong to see the above as alone sufficient to resolve the crisis which envelops everywhere and at every level the rising generation in the Catholic Church today. What marks them everywhere is their ignorance of the Supernatural as relevant to their lives. For so many of them religion is no more than a barely understood set of formulae; observances, usually presented in negative terms, to which they must hold. The question in their minds is, Why? As straight as that and, so often, those to whom they put their questions are unable to give them a satisfactory answer. They are left with their formulae, but without the understanding that must give them support. Small wonder that the young drift away. To them the whole thing seems so pointless. Courage comes when you understand. Where there is no understanding, there is no courage. Why should there be? Who would die—still less, live—for that which is, in reality, no more than a meaningless set of formulae for him or herself? Clearly, the school has been at fault here—in the developing world as well as in the developed. And the fault remains. It has to be cleared by first-class teaching within a school where you can—I can only put it this way—sense the Supernatural at every turn. I do not see any other way.

A Stop to Passivity in Face of Injustice

A final word is necessary where the dualism with which the Church has been charged, continues to affect and, indeed, afflict the minds and hearts of contemporary Catholic youth in Africa South as elsewhere. Put simply, the Catholic Church still appears to them as passive in the face of injustice; unprepared to act on behalf of the obviously afflicted for fear that, by so doing, she might place at risk her institutional structures. It is true, indeed,

that she maintains a strong front where the freedom of Catholics to practice their religion is concerned. But my reference here is not to this kind of situation. It is also true that her record on behalf of the people of Africa in the matter, for example, of the provision of hospitals, clinics, schools, training colleges, adult education centres and so on, has been little short of magnificent. It would be not merely childish, but churlish to belittle all that she has done in this regard and in the face not infrequently of very great difficulties. Reference here is not to this splendid effort and its continuation. It is rather to what appears, as I have said already, as her passivity in face of active injustice and its implication, which is of her seeming unwillingness to defend the rights of the poor when, by so doing, she might place her institutional structures at risk or lose the patronage of those rich sections of the Catholic community on which she relies for financial support. Or, again, it could be that, over the years, Church Authorities in the country concerned, have absorbed, however subconsciously, the values of the ruling class, so that her outlook is ruled largely by those values as and when she surveys a country's social and economic scene. Her inclination, in consequence, is to tolerate, go along with the status quo at the price so often of the deprived and the marginalised. I find it hard to see how the substance of these observations can be denied.

I believe that, if the Authorities of the Church do not change their attitude and their actions drastically in the countries and continents where these situations obtain and are there for all to see—and Africa South is no exception—she will not hold today's rising generation. Not that she should change her attitude and her actions simply and primarily to hold them. No way. She should change her attitude and her actions because, above all, justice demands it. If she does so, the rest will follow; and the young will see her for what she should be—for Christ's sake, strong in the face of injustice, the fearless defender of the rights of the poorest, a doer of deeds rather than a speaker of words. Once this is seen and grasped, they will come to her in droves.

Book Review

STOPPING THE ROT

Christianity in the Classroom—What Future ? By Lynn Murdoch. Order of Christian Unity, 58, Hanover Gardens, London SE 11; 50p.

The Order of Christian Unity has a remarkable record in speaking out firmly on the moral issues facing Britain today. I have seen them do battle splendidly in debates and newspaper correspondence with the revolting peddlars of the contraceptive-orientated "sex education" that is currently being foisted on the nation's children. I have joined with them in London's Trafalgar Square in public prayers for the protection of unborn babies threatened by abortion. They have spoken up bravely on behalf of the handicapped facing euthanasia, on behalf of children threatened with broken homes through divorce, and on behalf of the institution of the family at a time when it has been regarded as utterly old-fashioned to do so. But perhaps none of their campaigns has been so important as that emphasising the importance of allowing the teaching of Christianity its rightful place in the classrooms of Britain's State schools.

Many may feel that this is a lost cause : difficult enough, these days, to ensure that some semblance of orthodox Christianity is taught in our Catholic schools established specifically for that purpose, without burdening ourselves unduly with a campaign concerning other schools. But this pamphlet explains why such thinking is wrong. Ever since it was founded in the last century, our public-funded school system has been imbued with some idea of teaching Christianity, and the 1944 Education Act specified that religious education was to form a part of the curriculum and a daily act of worship be held in each school. It is quite clear from the Parliamentary debates of the time and from the statements made by educationalists that what was envisaged was not a hotch-botch of different religious ideologies in which youngsters would be invited to choose between the merits of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Marxism, or National Socialism, but the specific teaching of Christianity albeit of a somewhat vague, non-denominat-

ional nature. In launching a new network of educational establishments in Britain, the aims of education were to be seen as offering a spiritual as well as a practical and intellectual formation for life.

We may sneer at this now. We may refer to the obviously post-Christian aspects of modern British life, point to the nation's cultural and religious diversity, show the absurdity of preaching the muddled and confused faith that has resulted from 400 years of bickering following the disastrous founding of independent sects after the split with Rome. What is folly, however, is to hand over the whole of our educational network, on this basis, to the humanists and secularists who have merely been waiting for these arguments to triumph in order for them to achieve the breakthrough they wanted in creating the Godless nation of their dreams.

Lynn Murdoch's timely and crisply-argued pamphlet expounds on the reasons for retaining RE in the curriculum, and for making Christianity the core of every RE syllabus. She gives practical advice on how this can be done and answers, point by point, the various arguments against having Christianity in the classroom.

Mrs. Murdoch is herself a former teacher, and now the mother of two young children. She is also a convinced Christian, clearly of the evangelical persuasion. It is challenging to Catholics to realise that many evangelicals are taking up the cudgels on moral issues that would otherwise be neglected. For it is a simple fact that Britain is currently faced with a crucial choice: either to force Christianity out of the classroom as has happened in America thanks to Humanist pressure (it is now illegal there even to organise voluntary prayers at the start of a school day in a State-funded school) or to retail and upgrade its importance.

Alas, what has happened since the 1960s is a confused attitude towards what can legitimately be taught in the classroom under the RE banner, so that Christianity has been largely neglected in favour of discussions on political issues, talks on non-Christian religions, and visiting lecturers representing various pressure groups ranging from the Campaign for Homosexual Equality to the National Abortion Campaign.

—*Joanna Bogle*

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